

REMARKS

Claims 48-72 and 145-147 are pending. Claims 1-47 and 73-144 have been canceled. Claims 148-156 have been added.

The applicant appreciates the allowance of claims 145-147 and the allowability of claims 51-57 and 63-72 if rewritten in independent form. Claims 51-57 and 63-72 have been so rewritten.

Claims 48-50 and 58-62 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Peyre (US 5,116,074). This basis for rejection is respectfully traversed.

Peyre discloses a ski boot binding having base plates (6) and (7) (which the examiner interprets to be front and rear bodies, respectively), a pair of guide rods (11) which are fixed to base plate (6) but are slidably received within bores (12) and (13) in base plate (7), and springs (14). The springs (14) are disposed between threaded sleeves (15) and steps formed at the junction of bores (12) and (13). The springs (14) push base plate (7) against the rear surface of a pin (3) and simultaneously pull base plate (6) against the front surface of pin (3) as allowed by guide rods (11).

A tappet (18) is slidingly disposed in a bore (16) formed in base plate (7), wherein the front end of tappet (18) contacts the rear face of pin (3), and the rear end of tappet (18) is connected to a thrust piece (19). Thrust piece (19) contacts a cam portion (24) formed on the front of an actuating lever (23). The base plate (6) includes a stop part (28) for retaining the front portion of a boot (25), and the actuating lever (23) includes a hold-down device (21) for retaining the rear portion of the boot (25).

To separate the boot from the binding, the actuating lever (23) is rotated clockwise (in Fig. 2), which causes the cam portion (24) of actuating lever (23) to press against thrust piece (19). This force is communicated to tappet (18), which presses against pin (3) and forces base plate (7) rearwardly against the biasing forces of springs (14). The increased distance between base plates (6) and (7) allows boot (25) to be removed from the binding.

Claim 48 has been amended to clarify that the latch is pivotable to the release position, thereby allowing release of the rear tab held therein against the bias of the spring without movement

of the rear main body when the rear main body is affixed to the snowboard. By contrast, Peyre requires movement of the base plate (7) in order to function. Thus, Peyre neither discloses nor suggests the subject matter recited in claim 48 or the claims that depend therefrom.

Accordingly, it is believed that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 has been overcome by the foregoing amendment and remarks, and it is submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully requested. Allowance of all claims is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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**VERSION OF AMENDMENTS WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE  
IN THE CLAIMS**

Please amend claims 48, 51, 53, 55, 63, 70, 71 and 72 as follows:

48. (Twice Amended) A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening for receiving a front tab of a cleat;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a notch for receiving a rear tab of a cleat;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, said spring arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position; and

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of the rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring without movement of said rear main body when said rear main body is affixed to the snowboard.

51. (Amended) A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening for receiving a front tab of a cleat;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a notch for receiving a rear tab of a cleat;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, said spring arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of the rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring;

a latch securing means for preventing said latch from pivoting to said release position,  
wherein said latch securing means comprises:

a sliding shaft mounted on said rear main body, said sliding shaft including a head,  
wherein said sliding shaft is movable between: (a) a secure position wherein said head  
contacts said latch preventing the latch from pivoting to its release position, and (b) a free  
position, wherein said head is clear of the range of motion of said latch, allowing said latch to  
be pivoted to its release position; and

[A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 50, wherein said latch securing means further includes] a hook mounted on said sliding shaft, said hook including a groove, and a tab mounted on said rear main body, wherein when said sliding shaft is in said secure position said groove is engaged with said tab.

53. (Amended) A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening for receiving a front tab of a cleat;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a notch for receiving a rear tab of a cleat;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, said spring arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of the rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring; and

[A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 48,] wherein said cleat receiving notch has at least one notch bevel surface for engaging with a bevel surface on said cleat to cause a force to be applied to said notch bevel surface sufficient to overcome the biasing force of said spring, thereby pivoting said latch to said release position.

55. (Amended) A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening for receiving a front tab of a cleat;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a notch for receiving a rear tab of a cleat;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, said spring arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of the rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring; and

[A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 48, further including] a latch axle mounted on said rear main body, wherein said latch is pivotally mounted on said latch axle and said spring is mounted on said axle.

63. (Amended) A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a cleat receiving notch;

a cleat having a front tab and a rear tab, wherein said front tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving opening in said front main body and said rear tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving notch in said latch;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, wherein said spring is arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of said rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring; and

[A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 62,] wherein said cleat further includes a rear portion and a front portion, said front portion being lower than said rear portion relative to said binding mechanism, wherein said front tab extends from said front portion and said rear tab extends from said rear portion.

70. (Amended) A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;

a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a cleat receiving notch;

a cleat having a front tab and a rear tab, wherein said front tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving opening in said front main body and said rear tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving notch in said latch;

a spring mounted on said rear main body, wherein said spring is arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;

said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of said rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring; and

[A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 62,] wherein said rear tab has a bevel surface on a bottom portion thereof, said bevel surface being engageable with said latch to force said latch to pivot to said release position as said cleat is lowered against said binding mechanism.

71. (Amended) A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening;

a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;  
a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a cleat receiving notch;  
a cleat having a front tab and a rear tab, wherein said front tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving opening in said front main body and said rear tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving notch in said latch;  
a spring mounted on said rear main body, wherein said spring is arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;  
said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of said rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring; and

[A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 62,] wherein said latch has a beveled surface on a top portion thereof engageable with said rear tab such that lowering said rear tab against said latch forces said latch to pivot to said release position.

72. (Amended) A snowboard binding mechanism for securing a cleat adapted to be attached to a snowboard boot to a snowboard, comprising:

a front main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard, said front main body including a cleat receiving opening;  
a rear main body adapted to be affixed to the snowboard;  
a latch pivotally mounted to said rear main body to pivot between an engaged position and a release position, said latch including a cleat receiving notch;  
a cleat having a front tab and a rear tab, wherein said front tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving opening in said front main body and said rear tab is adapted to engage said cleat receiving notch in said latch;  
a spring mounted on said rear main body, wherein said spring is arranged to bias said latch toward said engaged position;  
said latch being pivotable to said release position allowing release of said rear tab held therein against the bias of said spring; and

[A snowboard binding mechanism as in claim 62,] wherein said latch has a latch bevel on a top portion thereof and said rear tab has a tab bevel on a bottom portion thereof, said latch bevel and tab bevel being engageable to pivot said latch to said release position as said cleat is lowered against said binding.